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BOOK REVIEWS

THE BOOK OF JUDGES, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES. C. F. BURNEY, D.Litt., Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture in the University of Oxford. Rivingtons. 1918. Pp. cxxviii, 528, with maps and phototype plates.

Professor Burney's preface, after reminding us that Biblical science does not stand still, and that we should be daily widening the basis of our research, declares that "for himself, he can say with truth that such first-hand acquaintance with the Babylonian and Assyrian language and literature as he has been able to acquire during the past fourteen years or so, has revolutionized his outlook upon Old Testament studies." It is with no little trepidation, therefore, that one takes up this bulky volume of 650 closely-printed pages. But apprehension soon gives way to a sense of relief; for, although the book contains a vast amount of material not hitherto found in works on the Book of Judges, it contains little that, even if universally accepted, would seriously affect the prevailing processes and opinions of Biblical scholarship.

The chief results of the author's occupation with Assyriological learning are to be found in his admittedly disproportionate dissertations on questions which lie beyond or aside from the subject-matter of the Book of Judges. Thus there is a long section (64 pages) of the Introduction devoted to "External information bearing on the period of Judges," which sets forth and discusses with great detail all that is known — and supposed — concerning the history of Palestine and Syria, as well as Mesopotamia and parts of Asia Minor, before ever the Israelites appeared upon the stage. Some of this is highly speculative, one "if" being piled upon another until the whole edifice leans dangerously, and a great deal of it would be more in place in technical Assyriological journals; but conservative Old Testament science has no positive quarrel with it. So also with the excursus on "Yahwe or Yahu, originally an Amorite deity" (pp. 243 ff.). Old Testament scholars are well aware that the name Yahwe is not Hebrew, and must therefore have been derived by the Palestinian Israelites either from some foreign source or else from their own foreign ancestors. To be sure, the Amorites themselves, according to Professor Burney, spoke a language nearly identical with Hebrew, so that the question remains as to whence they in their turn acquired title to the god. But we are content to leave the matter

there. Nor are we much shocked to find another "additional note" on the "Early identification of Yahwe with the Moon-god" (pp. 249 ff.), a deity whose worship will have extended from Ur of the Chaldees in southern Babylonia to Haran in the north, and thence again to the wilderness of Sin on the borders of Egypt. For if Hebrew *Yahwe* is the same as *Yahu* or *Yatum* or *Ya* of the Babylonian inscriptions, then, *Sin* being the moon-god of Babylonia, the Babylonian names *Ya-ma-e-ra-ah*, that is "Ya indeed is the moon," and *Sin-ya-tum*, that is "Sin is Yatum," and the Hebrew name *Sinai*, that is "Sin's mountain," combine to attest the fact that Yahwe was at one time identical with the moon-god Sin; a conclusion confirmed by the circumstance that a North Arabian tribe of Yahwe-worshippers was called *Jerahmeel*, which is (being interpreted as a species of Hebraeo-Babylonian jargon) "the moon indeed is god"! Such may be the hole of the pit whence Yahwe was dugged. It is only when we are told that the words of Exodus 24 9-11, "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire, and as the heaven itself for clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he put not forth his hand; and they beheld the deity, and did eat and drink" — that these words betray familiarity with Yahwe's lunar past, and suggest "the spectacle of the moon, riding at the full in the deep sapphire sky," that we are inclined to balk. One may, if one chooses, identify the bearer of the name *Yahu* in the Babylonian records with the Moon-god or anything else, in the absence of evidence to the contrary; but one must be careful not to let the Israelites of the historic period know that the talk is of their national deity. For they would hardly have allowed the prophet Elijah to travel forty days and forty nights beyond the southern confines of Canaan, to a cave on Mount Horeb, for an interview with the moon; or have dealt so savagely with a recognized fellow servant of the moon as they did with Sihon, king of the Amorites. And we may add — it is the author who raises the question — that Christians, at any rate, will probably continue to think "the alternative conception of a revelation in human form less unspiritual."

More sane and to the point is the essay on "The use of writing among the Israelites in the times of the Judges" (pp. 253 ff.), although this too is somewhat marred by a fantastic Assyriological note on the "Sumerio-Akkadian" origin of the Phoenician alphabet. The author's treatment of historical questions is naturally more successful where the field is less nebulous and the data more tangible.

For example, the section of the Introduction on the chronology of the Book of Judges furnishes an excellent conspectus of that involved subject, and, except for the erroneous assumption of the trustworthiness of the genealogy in I Samuel 14 3 (a demonstrable scribal concoction), leaves little to be desired. The first business, however, of a commentary on an ancient text is, not to discuss the historical problems which it suggests, but to determine, so far as possible, when and in what environment the writer of it wrote, just what he said, and what he meant. When this much has been achieved by the exegete, the historian may take up the task — preferably in a separate volume.

With regard to the composition and date of the Book of Judges, the author adopts in the main the conventional critical view. Our present book is a post-exilic enlargement of an earlier work, the so-called Deuteronomistic Judges; which was in turn merely a homiletical edition, with introduction and notes, of certain narrative extracts from a composite "prophetical" history book identical with the JE source of the Pentateuch and Joshua. Chapters 1 1-2 5, 9, 16, and 17-21 were not included in that edition, but were inserted, chiefly from the still extant JE source, by the post-exilic redactor R^P. Professor Burney departs from the current view, however, in denying emphatically that the earlier edition of Judges is properly characterized as Deuteronomistic, holding that, on the contrary, it antedated the Deuteronomic legislation and reform, to the development of which it very materially contributed. The principal argument for this contention is linguistic: unlike Joshua and Kings, the Book of Judges contains few of the stock phrases of Deuteronomy, showing affinity rather with the language of Joshua 24 and I Samuel 12, which are commonly assigned to the later stratum of the E document. He accordingly designates the earlier editor R^{E2}, "Redactor of the late Ephraimitic School," instead of R^D. The linguistic argument is by no means conclusive; for it is quite conceivable that, of two writers equally dominated by the Deuteronomic point of view and teaching, one should adhere more slavishly to the phraseology of Deuteronomy than the other; and the theological pragmatism of Judges, which after all is the important thing, is sufficiently akin to that of Kings. Nevertheless, it must be conceded that Professor Burney has furnished reason enough for a reconsideration of the critical position at this point, especially if, as has been plausibly maintained, the earlier Book of Judges embraced material now found in the first twelve chapters of the Book of Samuel. Unfortunately, he threatens to complicate the discussion with a theory of

his own as to the North Israelitish origin of Deuteronomy, which he promises to set forth in a future publication. When he does so, he will doubtless not overlook the fact that the theory involves the defense of the Samaritan as against the Jewish interpretation of Deuteronomy 12.

Only occasionally does the author hesitate to resolve the narratives themselves into their constituent elements, J, E, E², and R^{JE}. He detects both J and E material in the stories of Ehud, Gideon, Abimelech, and Jephthah, as well as in chapters 17–21. The prose story of Deborah and Barak is mainly E, though contaminated with matter from another source; the Song of Deborah came in with E; the story of Samson is J. In the judgment of the present writer, it is by no means certain that two primary sources underlie so many of the narratives even of the Deuteronomistic Judges; while it is absolutely certain that no second source was ever employed in the stories of the Migration of the Danites and the Benjamite War, where Professor Burney's analytical *tour de force* reminds of nothing so much as of the late Professor Green's satirical "analysis" of the parable of the Prodigal Son.¹ The important fact, which our author has failed to perceive, is that the sections inserted in the Book of Judges by the post-exilic redactor, from the still extant extra-canonical ancient literature, had an entirely different history. It is an unwarranted, though too prevalent, assumption that all the pre-exilic narratives contained in our books of Genesis to Samuel are descended in a single and direct line from the union, sometime in the seventh century, of the two documents which critics label J and E. For the rest, the characterization of the J and E national histories as "prophetical," although quite the fashion among a certain class of writers on the Old Testament, has little justification, and should be abandoned, in the interest alike of accuracy and of more fruitful research. E is a somewhat uncertain quantity; in particular, matter designated E² is not easily distinguished from that which is assigned to R^{JE} and subsequent redactions. But the J document, upon any entertainable theory of its date and compass, affords no justification whatever for the name "prophetical."

Quite the least satisfactory part of the book is the section devoted to the elucidation of the Song of Deborah, which occupies no less than 81 pages. Besides a voluminous running commentary on the text, there is a discussion of the art of Hebrew versification in general, a "detailed examination of the rhythm of the Song," a chapter on

¹ "Auch im Alten Testament kann die literarische Analyse zum Kinderspiel ausarten." Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 57.

its "climactic parallelism," an English translation (printed twice in full) reproducing the supposed "rhythm" of the original, and a complete transliteration of the restored Hebrew text as it was pronounced in pre-Masoretic times (!) — with this result, by way of illustration:

Awáke, | awáke, | Deborah!
 Awáke, | awáke, | sing paéan!
 Ríse | Barák, | and lead cáptive
 Thy cáptors, | O són | of Abinó'am!
 Cóme, | ye commánders | of Ísrael!
 Ye that volunteéred | among the péople, || bléss ye | Yahwéh!
 Let the ríders | on táwny || she-ásses | reviéw it,
 And lét | the wayfárers || recáll it | to mínd!
 Hárk | to the maídens || laúghing at | the wélls!
 Thére | they recoúnt || the righteous ácts| , of Yahwéh,
 The righteous ácts | of his árm | in Ísrael.

This represents a "strophe" of the original (as restored by transposition, emendation, and conjectural interpretation), showing five lines of three accents each, followed by five lines of four accents, and a final line of three accents. It must not be supposed, however, that the remaining "strophes" of the song exhibit the same scheme. On the contrary, each "strophe" is a law unto itself. So that one wonders how the poor Hebrews ever divined what rhythmization was expected of them without the aid of Professor Burney's space-rules to guide them. As to the transliteration and rhythmization of the original, if the author himself has succeeded in pronouncing *hammith-naddabhím, baggabborím, umizZabhulín, tubarrakhí, wattuyabbábh*, with but one accent as indicated, and as demanded by his "rhythm," he has performed a phonetic miracle, the wonder of which is not lessened by the specimen of *alliterative* poetry from "Piers Plowman" misguidedly adduced in the addendum on page xiv. It will be noticed from the above example, moreover, that the ancient Hebrew poets actually practiced *enjambement*! For the rest, the statement that "the theory of Hebrew rhythm expounded by Sievers is now generally adapted [adopted ?] by scholars" (p. 100) could have been made only by a writer who had failed to grasp the essence of that theory, and was but superficially acquainted with the literature of the subject. So far from being now followed "very generally" by scholars, there is reason to doubt that the theory has been entertained by Sievers himself since the year 1908, when its very foundations were demolished.

In general, the author's textual criticism and interpretation, while undeniably exhibiting abundant erudition and almost incalculable

labor, fall far short of the rigidly scientific standards set by Professor Moore's publications of twenty-odd years ago. To mention just one point, it seems incredible that a scholar living in Oxford should have contented himself with the notoriously inadequate and unreliable footnotes of Kittel's edition of the Hebrew Bible for the readings of a text so important for the Book of Judges as that of the Codex Lugdunensis.

Such spellings as Joshua', Hosea', Gide'on, Cana'an, Cana'anite, are neither English nor transliterated Hebrew.

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THE PRESENT CONFLICT OF IDEALS. A STUDY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF THE WORLD WAR. RALPH BARTON PERRY. Longmans, Green, & Co. 1918. Pp. xiii, 549.

Professor Perry has given his readers two books in one; the first an examination of the moral and religious aspects of contemporary philosophical tendencies, the second a study of the national characteristics and the political traditions of Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States. The dozen chapters which make up the latter part of the volume belong essentially to the literature of the war, and have now lost some, though by no means all, of their pertinency and interest. But the conflict with which most of the book deals has its seat chiefly in men's minds, and its fighting lines are drawn without regard to national boundaries. It is not, in spite of the title, merely a conflict of "ideals" which Professor Perry describes; it is more largely with rival conceptions of the general nature of things, of the implications of man's cognitive and moral experience, of the relation to human interests and ideals of the reality which envelops them, that he is concerned. The book, in short, has even more to do with the philosophy of religion, in the broadest sense of the term, than with ethics; though no single label could easily do justice to the range of its themes. Few of the more significant tendencies of contemporary thought are left unconsidered. Nor does Professor Perry, in the present volume, limit his interest to the philosophy of the schools. Strindberg and Maeterlinck find their place along with the more technical moralists; neither "Billy" Sunday nor George Moore is altogether ignored, among the samples of the mind of the twentieth century, and Ian Hay jostles Hegel in the